



15th meeting of the FAO-OIE Rinderpest Joint Advisory Committee

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11th December 2019

1. Opening remarks and adoption of the agenda

The 15th meeting of the FAO-OIE Rinderpest Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) was opened by the Chair of the JAC, Dr Junaidu Maina. This meeting was held using video teleconference. Dr Maina communicated the apologies of Dr Alejandro Costa and Dr Gerrit Viljoen who could not take part in the meeting.

The agenda was adopted with minor modifications, as per Appendix I.

The list of participants is included as Appendix II.

The action items from the present meeting are included in this report as Appendix III.

2. Action Items from the 14th meeting of the JAC (December 2018)

Action item 1/2018: JAC to lead the draft of a short communication on rinderpest preparedness to be published in a peer-reviewed journal.

Status: following the conclusion of the Sequence and Destroy project at TPI¹, a number of articles were published in the press and in scientific publications, raising awareness on post-eradication activities and specifically on the destruction of virus holdings at TPI.

Action item 2/2018: FAO and OIE to finish the evaluation of the documentation submitted by the FAO-OIE designated Rinderpest Holding Facilities (RHF) and ask for additional information when necessary. OIE to draft a Resolution for extension of the five RHF, and designation of CIRAD² and IVDC³, to be presented at the 87th General Session, in May 2019.

Status: the five RHF designated in 2015 had their mandate extended for another 3-year period through OIE Resolution No 24 from the 87th OIE General Session in May 2019. OIE Resolution No 23 for designation of CIRAD and IVDC was approved at the same time.

Action item 3/2018: Rinderpest Secretariat to identify the next event which the RHF's representatives will attend and a side meeting can be organized.

Status: the 2nd meeting of the FAO-OIE RHF Network was held in Tokyo, Japan, on 14th - 15th November 2019, thanks to the financial support of the United States of America Defence Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA).

Action item 4/2018: OIE to share the criteria with Dr Costa and agree on a final version with FAO. FAO and OIE to publish the criteria on the rinderpest websites.

Status: the Criteria were finalized. These are shared with relevant parties on demand.

3. Debrief of the RHF Network meeting and status of the rinderpest vaccine reserve (RVR)

Dr Samia Metwally, from FAO, presented the outcomes of the 2nd meeting of the FAO-OIE RHF Network, which was held in Tokyo, Japan, on 14th - 15th November 2019. Four countries still storing rinderpest virus containing materials (RVCM) outside of FAO-OIE designated RHF were invited to this meeting with the objective of making connections with RHF's and understanding the challenges associated with becoming an RHF and the current

¹ The Pirbright Institute

² Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement

³ China Institute for Veterinary Drug Control

strategies to reduce RVCV. These countries were Iran, Mongolia, Russia, and Turkey. The outcomes from the RHF Network meeting, as agreed by the participants are:

- The RHF's agreed on a workplan for the next biennium (2020-2021) which includes:
 - Deploying the non-infectious rRT-PCR to all RHF's and make it functional in the next two years, including the execution of a PT ring trial;
 - 6-monthly teleconferences, instead of quarterly;
 - In the spirit of reducing the global holdings of RVCV, particularly wild-type virus, all RHF's agreed, in principle, to share their virus inventories through the Rinderpest Virus Tracking System and, subsequently, to destroy duplicate strains and those strains that are already sequenced, upon approval from the respective authority;
- The RHF's recognized the need for a serological test in the post-eradication era and agreed to collaboratively develop a non-infectious serological test, subject to availability of funds. FAO and OIE (or RHF's if possible) will seek funding;
- FAO and OIE should liaise with the African Union to advocate for the destruction of wild-type virus in Africa;
- The participants agreed that there should be a procedure in place for the deployment of vaccine from the Rinderpest Vaccine Reserve in case of an emergency, including having an IATA certified shipper, export permit and shipping supplies.
- Turkey is in the process of making a decision to transfer their RVCV to CIRAD. FAO offered assistance. The process is pending on decision from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.
- Mongolia claimed to have destroyed their RVCV in 2004 and agreed to send an official letter of confirmation to the Rinderpest Secretariat;
- Russia decided to apply to become an RHF;
- Iran will complete RAZI vaccine institute's application to RHF Category B. If designation is not granted, Iran will consider transferring its RVCV to a RHF.

The JAC requested that the report of the RHF network meeting is included in the present report as an annex. It can be found in [Appendix IV](#).

Dr Metwally informed the group of the current status of the rinderpest vaccine reserve NIAH⁴, Japan. FAO has a project with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan to continue producing rinderpest vaccine for national security and for regional and global deployment in emergency outbreak response. Total number of doses is approximately 1 million, between manufactured vaccine and bulk antigen. The African Union released a call for tender in January 2019 and selected NVI⁵, Ethiopia, as the manufacturer which would produce vaccine to replenish the reserve held by AU-PANVAC⁶. The Rinderpest Secretariat is working with NVI to ensure that the *Criteria for manufacturers wishing to produce rinderpest vaccine* are upheld. FAO is discussing with the Italian Government the establishment of an FAO vaccine reserve in Rome, at the military base near the airport. The facility would apply to be designated as an RHF in category B.

4. Discussion on pending application for RHF

Ms Catherine Robertson led the discussion on the pending application from ICAR⁷, India, to be designated as an RHF in Category A. The group was of the opinion that ICAR presented a strong application. However, a few issues need to be resolved before a site-inspection by a team of experts nominated by the Rinderpest Secretariat can take place. The Rinderpest secretariat will ask ICAR for clarification on the main point of contact for RHF purposes,

⁴ National Institute for Animal Health

⁵ National Veterinary Institute

⁶ African Union – Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Center

⁷ Indian Council of Agricultural Research – National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases

along with the report of the last inspection of the facility done by the National Authority. ICAR needs to further elaborate on the biosecurity procedures in the manual. The situation concerning IATA training for staff and capacity to receive and send out materials will be clarified. Finally, the national contingency plan will be further reviewed by FAO, after considering the comments from OIE.

ACTION ITEM 1 – Rinderpest Secretariat to communicate to ICAR that the submission of further information is required before the site inspection can take place.

5. Pending application for rinderpest vaccine production

Dr Shija Jacob, from FAO, informed the JAC about an application received from NVI, Ethiopia, to produce rinderpest vaccine (RBOK strain). This application results from a call for tender done by the African Union in January 2019, in which NVI was selected as the vaccine manufacturer which would produce vaccine to replenish the reserve held at AU-PANVAC. Dr Jacob noted that the application was incomplete and that the Rinderpest Secretariat had already contacted NVI to ask for a number of documents, including the application form, approval for rinderpest vaccine production from the National veterinary Authority, national contingency plan for rinderpest, biosafety manual for NVI and SOPs for packaging, storing and shipping vaccine.

ACTION ITEM 2 – Rinderpest Secretariat to continue liaising with NVI to ensure that the Criteria for manufacturers wishing to produce rinderpest vaccine are upheld.

6. Strategy to address countries storing rinderpest virus

Dr Metwally addressed the group to note the progress done in destruction and sequestration of RVCM since the declaration of global freedom. In 2011, 36 countries held RVCM outside of RHF, compared to 8 countries in 2019. It was highlighted that the remaining countries are the most challenging, and the Rinderpest Secretariat continually advocates with representatives from these countries and the concerned institutes. FAO will assist Viet Nam in destroying their RVCM during the first quarter of 2020. Dr Mariana Marrana, from the OIE, informed the group that the Republic of Korea had expressed the intention to destroy their RVCM before the end of 2019, and that the OIE DG has shown interest to meet with the remaining countries at the margin of the next OIE general Session, in May 2020.

ACTION ITEM 3 – JAC to write to FAO and OIE DGs to note the concern regarding the 8 countries that committed to destroy or sequester all RVCM in 2011 but that have not yet acted on it. FAO and OIE to develop a one-pager timeline of achievements since 2011 to be sent to the DGs together with the letter.

7. Conclusion

On behalf of the JAC, Dr Maina thanked FAO and OIE for their dedication and progress in the implementation of post-eradication activities. Drs Maina and Metwally noted the contribution of Ms Brand to the work of the Rinderpest Secretariat and wished her well for her new position at the OIE.

FAO and OIE showed their gratitude to the JAC for their advice and guidance, appreciating their continuous contribution towards maintaining global freedom from rinderpest.

The 16th meeting of the JAC will be held at a date to be determined in 2020, at the OIE Headquarters in Paris, France

Appendix I

15TH MEETING, RINDERPEST JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

11th December 2019

Agenda

Time	Subject	Speaker
15h00-15h15	Welcome remarks Adoption of the agenda Adoption of the report of the 14th JAC meeting/action items	Chair, Junaidu Maina
15h15-15h45	Debrief of the RHF Network meeting and status of the RVR	Samia Metwally (FAO)
15h45-16h45	Discussion on pending application for RHF - India	Catherine Robertson
16h45-17h00	<i>Break – do not disconnect VTC</i>	
17h00-17h15	Pending application for vaccine manufacturing – NVI, Ethiopia	Shija Jacob (FAO)
17h15-18h00	Strategy to address countries storing rinderpest virus	Samia Metwally (FAO)
18h00-18h10	Summary of the meeting and closing remarks	Chair, Junaidu Maina

Appendix II

15TH MEETING, RINDERPEST JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Paris, 11th December 2019

List of participants

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Appendix III

MEETING OF THE RINDERPEST JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

11th December 2019

Action Items from the 15th Meeting

No	Item	Responsible party	Deadline
1	Rinderpest Secretariat to communicate the outcome of the application review to India and to follow-up accordingly.	FAO	31 December 2019
2	Rinderpest Secretariat to continue liaising with NVI to ensure that the Criteria for manufacturers wishing to produce rinderpest vaccine are upheld.	FAO	Ongoing
3	JAC to write to FAO and OIE DGs to note the concern regarding the 8 countries that committed to destroy or sequester all RVCM in 2011 but that have not yet acted on it. FAO and OIE to develop a one-pager timeline of achievements since 2011 to be sent to the DGs together with the letter.	OIE	16 th JAC meeting

Appendix IV



Report 2nd
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